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## **Leadership Skills in Start-ups: A Quantitative Study on the Requirement Profile**

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### **Abstract**

Start-ups are young companies designed to grow quickly. In a highly competitive environment, leadership is a prerequisite for start-up survival and an investment criterion for venture capitalists. Although entrepreneurial leadership is considered to be distinct, there is little empirical evidence on the leadership requirements faced by founders and CEOs in start-ups. Against this background, an online survey was conducted on the relevance of leadership tasks and skills. 188 leaders in German start-ups reported on their understanding of leadership and rated 18 skills on the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) scales. The data show that startup leaders prioritize vision, strategy, and decision making over human resources and team development. The need for strategic, interpersonal, and cognitive skills is consistently perceived as high. Requirements for business skills are moderate and vary widely. The results contribute to a leadership skills model for entrepreneurs and provide implications for entrepreneurship education and training.

**Keywords:** competence; entrepreneurship; leadership; management; venture

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